

Farmers Markets at the Capitol Project Report December 20, 2010

Background

The Michigan Department of Agriculture provided a \$2000 grant to assist with transitioning the management of the July and September Farmers Markets at the Capitol events from the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) to Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS) and Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA). MDA agreed to provide staff assistance in the transition from the previous market manager and volunteers to assist with loading and unloading of vendors the days of the markets. It was the obligation of the new hosts to manage the market and seek additional funds to cover the costs of running the markets. It is also understood that MDA will continue to partner with MIFFS and MIFMA to hold Farmers Markets at the Capitol in future years.

Event Implementation

Maggie Smith, a part time employee with MIFMA/MIFFS, coordinated the two markets. She worked with a team of MIFFS and MIFMA staff to manage the events. In addition all six staff people were involved for various activities from fundraising to EBT management at the markets. This team effort in cooperation with MDA staff assistance resulted in two successful events. The Governor toured the July Market and the Food Bank Council held its Harvest Kick off event for its fall food and fundraising campaign. In addition the Lieutenant Governor toured the September market with the Chair of the Commission of Agriculture, Todd Regis.

To defray costs vendors were charged for booth space and use of electricity if needed. In addition, MIFFS sought sponsorships and successfully attracted non-traditional event sponsors such as Independent Bank, Lansing Community College, and the Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau. We expect to grow sponsorship in the coming years as we gained new sponsors as just by sharing the summary data from the July market resulted in new sponsors for the September market.

The two events occurred on Thursday, July 22, 2010, a nice sunny day till the market ended, and Thursday, September 16, 2010, a rainy, overcast day that saw record rainfall before the scheduled close of the market. Through use of volunteers to count attendees and a dot survey at each market we estimate there were nearly 6000 shoppers at the July market and about 3500 at the September market. We attribute the smaller number of participants in September to the rainy, overcast weather. For all practical purposes the market closed when the rain started coming down about 1 p.m. The blessing of the rainy, overcast day is that we received more radio coverage as the radio announcers felt sorry for folks at the Farmers Market at the Capitol.

MDA staff was a great help to us as we 'learned the ropes' of managing the markets. They also assisted with getting the Governor's office to attend as well as helping at the market and getting media coverage. It was a great team effort; we look forward to working together again in 2011.

Implementing EBT at the Farmer Markets at the Capitol

Through the expertise of MIFMA and in partnership with the Lansing City Market, bridge cards were accepted by vendors at each market. We did a soft launch of the availability of EBT at the July market and had Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) sales of \$297. This figure is comparable to at typical sales day at the Lansing City Market. This service was more highly publicized for the September market and SNAP sales more then doubled to \$678. If the September market had been on a better weather day, the sales would have been higher still.

Vendor Survey Results

All vendors are required to report their sales in order to be eligible to participate in future markets at the Capitol. Attached is a summary of the vendor and shopper surveys for each market. The figures provided by vendors are likely to be conservative as vendors do not count their receipts at the market and typically complete the vendor survey and turn it in at the market. Both markets this year exceeded the reported vendor sales of the July 2009 market (\$34, 692) at \$46,649 in July and \$35,662 in September. The average sales per vendor in July exceeded the July 2009 figure while the September average sales per vendor were less. See attached summary documents for details.

Customer Counts and Survey Results

Though the customer counts methodology we estimate 5886 adult customers at the July Farmers Market and 3480 adult customers at the September Farmers Market. While shopper numbers were lower at the September market it is interesting to note that September average sales per shopper were higher at \$19.03 versus \$17.75 for the average of a July market shopper.

Another interesting note was the reason shoppers came to the market. For both markets the number one reason for coming to the market was to support Michigan farmers and businesses and the second reason (31%) was to purchase food items.

Summary of impacts

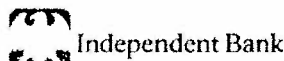
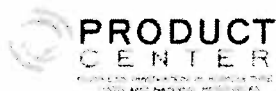
Benefits to vendors at both markets (47 vendors in July and 58 in September) total sales of \$82,000 (conservatively).

An estimated 9400 shoppers participated in both markets and 10,000 cars passed by the market each day.

New audiences were reached by working with Lansing Community College and the Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Between the two markets there were SNAP sales of \$ 975.

2010 Sponsors



Farmers Market at the Capitol Thursday July 22, 2010 Market Analysis

The Farmers Market at the Capitol was held on Thursday, July 22, 2010, it was the first of two special markets planned to promote locally grown and processed food, agriculture products and Michigan's farmers markets operating throughout the season. The market was coordinated by the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) and Michigan Food & Farming Systems (MIFFS) in partnership with the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA).

Exhibitors Present

- 48 Vendors (Over half were host organizations' members)
- 5 Non-profits

Market Total Vendor Sales Reported:

\$46,699

Average sales reported (48 vendors):

\$979.15

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) sales: \$297

The number of farmers' markets licensed to accept SNAP benefits is increasing nationwide. As people discover the benefit of buying fresh, nutritious, local products, farmers and farmers' markets are seizing the opportunity to broaden their customer base by adding a SNAP payment option.

Customer Counts:

1st Hour (10:25 - 10:35) = 281
 2nd Hour (11:25 - 11:35) = 215
 3rd Hour (12:25 - 12:35) = 352
 4th Hour (1:25 - 1:35) = 133
 *5th Hour (2:25 - 2:35) = 67
 Total: 1,048

Estimated Total # of shoppers: 6,288 (1,048 X 6)

**Although we didn't physically count customers during the last hour of the market, there were still shoppers. We decided that a fair measurement would be half the number of customers as the 4th hour.*

Range of Estimated Market Day Sales*:

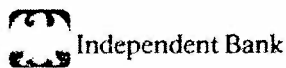
\$47,902 to \$62,880

**Ranges of Estimated Market Day Sales:*

A conservative estimate of total market sales for the day is developed by dividing the Estimated total number of adult customers (6,288) by the mean number of people customers were shopping for (2.33**) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$17.75). *This method very conservatively estimates total market sales for the day at \$47,902. A more realistic estimate for total market sales for the day would be closer to \$62,880 (6,288 X \$10 per shopper)*

*** At most markets when there are more than two people in a shopping party only one of them is buying, however at this market it was observed that almost all members of the shopping party were purchasing at the market.*

2010 Sponsors



Continued on the following page.

What was the most important reason you came to the market today?

Of those that responded, 41% said that the most important reason they came to the market was to Support MI Farmers and Businesses. Thirty-one percent of those surveyed said that they came to the market to purchase food items.

How did you hear about today's market?

Of those that responded, 38% heard about the market by E-mail, 27% heard about the market through Word of Mouth and 15% heard about it through another resource.

How much did you/ will you spend at the farmers market today?

The mean or average expenditure of shoppers was \$17.75. The median was \$15, meaning that half of the shoppers spent less than \$15 and half spent more than \$15. The most popular amount spent at the market was \$10.

How many ADULTS are in your shopping party this afternoon?

The mean or average number of adults per shopping party was 2.33. The median was 2 and the mode, or most common response was also two people.

Questions about market analysis?

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Want to sponsor future markets?

Contact:

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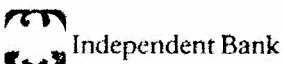
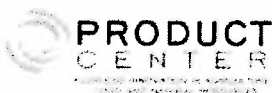
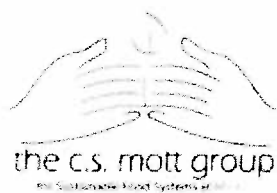
172 Natural Resources Building

East Lansing, MI 48824

Host Organizations:



2010 Sponsors



Farmers Market at the Capitol Thursday September 16, 2010 Market Analysis

The Farmers Market at the Capitol was held on Thursday, September 16, 2010, it was the second of two special markets planned to promote locally grown and processed food, agriculture products and Michigan's farmers markets operating throughout the season. The market was coordinated by the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) and Michigan Food & Farming Systems (MIFFS) in partnership with the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA).

Exhibitors Present

- 60 Vendors (Over half were members of Michigan Food and Farming Systems or the Michigan Farmers Market Association)
- 7 Non-profits
- 5 Sponsors

Total Vendor Sales Reported:

\$35,647

Average Sales reported (57 vendors):

\$625.39

*Due to inclement weather, the market closed at 1 pm. These numbers do not reflect a complete day of sales.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) sales: \$678

The number of farmers markets licensed to accept SNAP benefits is increasing nationwide. As people discover the benefit of buying fresh, nutritious, local products, farmers and farmers markets are seizing the opportunity to broaden their customer base by adding a SNAP payment option. This was the first year SNAP benefits were accepted at the Farmers Market at the Capitol.

Customer Counts:

1st Hour (10:25 - 10:35) = 220

2nd Hour (11:25 - 11:35) = 117

3rd Hour (12:25 - 12:35) = 220

4th Hour (1:25 - 1:35) = 23*

*Due to inclement weather, the market closed at 1 pm. These numbers do not reflect a complete number of customers.

Total: 580

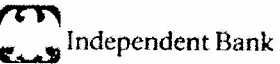
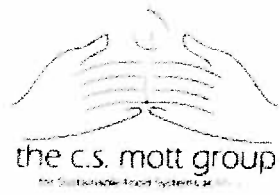
Estimated Total # of shoppers: 3,480 (580 x 6)

The mean or average number of adults per shopping party was 1.94. The median was 2 and the mode, or most common response was one person.

The mean or average expenditure of shoppers was \$19.03. The median was \$15, meaning that half of the shoppers spent less than \$15 and half spent more than \$15. The most popular amount spent at the market was \$10.

Range of Estimated Market Day Sales: \$34,136.29 - \$34,800*

2010 Sponsors



*Range of Estimated Market Day Sales:

A conservative estimate of total market sales for the day is developed by dividing the estimated total number of adult customers (3,480) by the mean number of people customers were shopping for (1.94**) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$19.03). *This method very conservatively estimates total market sales for the day at \$34,136.29.* A more realistic estimate for total market sales for the day would be closer to \$34,800 (3,480 X \$10 (mode) per shopper).

** At most markets when there are more than two people in a shopping party only one of them is buying, however at this market it was observed that almost all members of the shopping party were purchasing at the market.

Why consumers attend the market

Of those that responded to the dot survey conducted at the market, 37% said that the most important reason they came to the market was to support Michigan farmers and businesses. Thirty one percent of those surveyed said that they came to the market to purchase food items.

Where shoppers live

Of those that responded to the dot survey, 57% lived less than 10 miles from the Farmers Market at the Capitol. Twenty three percent lived 10 to 25 miles away and 10% lived 26 to 50 miles from the market.

How customers learn about the Farmers Market at the Capitol

Of those that responded, 43% heard about the market through online communications, 29% heard about the market through word of mouth and 13% heard about it through newspaper, radio or TV and 11% passed by the market and saw it.

Questions about market analysis? markets?

Contact:

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Want to sponsor future

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Host Organizations:



Michigan Food & Farming Systems-MIFFS

Bringing Farmers & Communities Together

